/52 cont./

881 will mean serious troubles for her family, since the noncompliance with social norms will bring the consequences of her illegal behavior on the family group. In addition she will be lacking in responsibility and will perform badly her role as sister, wife, and mother, just the functions for which she is preparing, and these two factors weigh very much in the life of the Guajiro woman as a member of society. The charms properly applied so that they transmit their power will assure her married happiness: She will not find herself exposed to the problems of polygamy, which imply lack of affection and ill-treatment from the man who buys her for his wife, and in this way she will have the longed-for predominance over him and over the co-wives, who in consequence will take a secondary place by the force of her personality.

881 Once inside the hammock she must not move nor change
784 her original position, because it is believed that /should she do so/, on being brought down later, she will have one leg longer than the other. Neither may she scratch any part of her body because that will leave visible scars. This matter is very important as the ceremony of the seclusion transforms her physically from a girl to a woman, wholly bound to the canon of beauty held by her group, an aspect, which like the others will also greatly affect her adult life. One must also
826 take into account that in La Guajira a physical defect has
578 a powerful influence on the individual and to mention it is equivalent to an insult which will give rise to resentment on the part of the adult and could bring sinister consequences upon the offender.

Neither should the initiate spit on the floor, because by doing so her honor will be slandered in her unmarried life as well as later after marriage, as they would say of her, judging by appearances or through unfounded malevolence, that she had dealings with a man. They will say she is a "madcap" /cabeza-loco/, a nickname they give to a woman of easy virtue and which causes discord between men and women and which will deeply affect her legitimate hopes for marriage.

/66 cont./

583 836 the man feels satisfied, because the price paid included, tacitly, her virginity. If the woman's relatives do not handle the situation prudently, reprisals and hostilities may take place between the two groups. Also in these cases the man will claim the necklace which he gave the woman as a sign of their betrothal the day the marriage was arranged. But he does not do this with an eye to gain but to make the woman suffer some part of the humiliation /67/ he himself felt on learning of the deception. Furthermore, as the necklace is a sign of engagement, asking for its return resembles an act of breaking it, although, in point of fact, the woman continues to be tied to the man with matrimonial obligations.

At times the man will follow another norm of conduct, especially at the present time when this state of affairs occurs more frequently and the claims for compensation payment for this condition are losing importance: He himself assumes the punishment for the deception. He roughly inquires of the woman: "Why are you not a virgin when I bought you believing that you were? Why don't you say who possessed you before I did?" He goes from insult to action and beats the woman, who, recognizing her inferior situation does not dare to protest.

It is possible that the Indian will not at first go beyond insulting the woman in private, but under the influence of alcohol the [152] resentment grows out of hand, and it is then that, in the presence of his friends, he will recount his problem and complain. Not content with this, he makes up songs referring to the subject which contain insulting commentaries and will sing them to his wife when with his friends to humiliate her in front of them and so obtain some satisfaction for what he personally suffers. In this ●[578] state of drunkenness it is not uncommon that he will beat his wife, shielding himself from reproach by the fact that as he has not been repaid the part of the marriage payment due him, her relatives are not in a position to protest.

Often with time the matter gets forgotten, and it only crops up on certain occasions when they quarrelsomely bring up all the past with its emotional content, due to some disobedience on the

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548 546 Bond service. Bond service is different from slavery in that it is not the result of a conquest in war of one group by another, but rather the consequence of economic decline, since when a group cannot support its members, they sell them. Years ago large numbers were sold to Venezuela as farm hands to the Caribbean Islands, etc.; and although the investment was never very safe, due to the escaping of the Indians, the sales were numerous, and even today they are very frequent. Furthermore, it is common practice at the present time in the Jarara region, short of resources in summer, to take the nephews and nieces of an individual who has been forced by necessity to commit robbery as bond servants to repay by their own labor what was stolen.

Women in this situation, separated from their group and unable to be helped by them, are coveted by the men. Those who are sent away, on their return, find themselves in a situation similar to that of slaves who have come back. They settle in the cities and turn to prostitution, as the whites find in them a simple solution of their problems, and they find a means of subsistence.

548 177 The mestizo. Cross breeding /mestizaje/ has not affected Guajiro culture in respect to the tradition regarding magic, language, organization, etc., but has had an effect on social morality, which /75/ is readily forsaken by the mestizo woman of lower class, commonly called cabeza loca ("madcap"), by the general run of Indians, owing to her sexual promiscuity, her easily becoming a prostitute and giving herself and living for certain periods of time with a man, (mestizo or white as a general rule) to leave him later to follow an endless chain. The pure-blooded Guajiro woman, even if she takes to prostitution, never abandons, from any motive, the established norms of modesty, such as never to show herself naked, never to behave rowdily, etc., as there is no greater insult than that a man should affirm such things about her. The mestizo woman, however, does not respect these concepts. For this reason she is sought after more and more, and she freely and openly throws over the traditional

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583 Generally, the girl's family is advised by the suitor's relatives that they will come to buy her. The man, on his part, has requested his most influential maternal uncle, or one who is considered a "cacique," to go in company with his mother and other friends to arrange the purchase of the girl of his choice. They arrive dressed in their best and receive the most generous hospitality from the girl's relatives. They hand over as a sign of the engagement the so-called "prendas /"ornaments"/," which [301] are necklaces of gold set with tuma stones (1), the value and

1. A mineral quartz used as a precious stone.

number of which depend on the economic strength of the suitor, going all the way up to ten in persons of the highest standing, especially when the man is acquiring his first wife, who as we have seen is the principal one.

If the girl's relatives see that the marriage is an advantageous one, they accept the gifts. If they do not accept them, this [578] indicates a definite refusal and rarely occurs, since it implies contempt which could give rise to serious differences between the groups concerned. Once the necklaces are handed over, the spokesman for the bridegroom offers to buy the girl, and the girl's maternal relative of most authority replies, fixing the price, [554] which generally is equal to that paid by the girl's father for her mother; often they get a higher price, which increases their prestige. They argue for a short time until they arrive at an arrangement between them as to the price and the basis of payment. Then the young man's relatives leave to tell him of the arrangement made, which he respects and accepts without making any kind of objection, and he gets ready to pay the payment agreed upon in order to obtain his wife. /84/.

556 583 Payment in cows. The number of heads of livestock that a man has shows his economic position and through this his status in the family group and in the whole community, because stock

/116 cont./

593 satisfies him, and she becomes jealous; and this jealousy and the recriminations which it causes may be the source of the quarrels between husband and wife so frequent in Guajiro homes.

A second cause of the ill-treatment from their husbands which the Guajiro women suffer is the inequality of status between the two. When the wife lacks effective backing, the man does not attempt to limit his quarrelsome conduct nor his reactions of anger. She on her part hides her problem from her relatives and from outsiders in order not to show the lowering of her prestige and position, which might be taken advantage of by third persons to further trouble her or her children.

593 A third cause is the abuse of the drunken man, who takes
578 advantage of fiestas or gatherings among themselves or outsiders to attend these parties and drink, or does the same without any excuse whatever. It is at these times that such a man shows the worst sides of his character. He becomes aggresive, looks for quarrels with anyone, mulls over the past, and if he can finds some reason for taking offense, although it may be completely insignificant, and enlarges on it, giving free rein to his aggressive impulses -- for example, if a man's wife was not a virgin when he married her or he is not sure of her faithfulness. The slightest disobedience may be sufficient stimulus for the man to unleash his wrath against his wife, singing allusive songs about her lack of virginity before she was married or other faults and later passing from words to threats and then to acts, beating her and even mutilating her, as happened in Nazaret to two women belonging to a poor group whose drunken husband went to visit them. One of the women had her upper lip bitten off and the other woman was gravely injured. They hid the affair for a long time, /117/ but they were obliged to ask the Capuchin mission for help when the wound was already very infected. In another case the husband bit off his wife's nose. There are detailed cases of women who have had their ears torn off in moments like

/117 cont./

593 578 these or have been brutally kicked or beaten with sticks or dragged by their hair, etc. The only sanction, the claim made by the woman's family, is frequently not made, and these episodes end in one of two ways: First, with the death of the woman, in which case her husband makes some payment, under pressure of popular opinion of outsiders or of his own relatives, who refuse to admit into their midst a criminal with no justifiable motive, or because of the possible connections and alliances which his wife's relatives may be able to make in an extreme case like this. Second, with the suicide of the woman, since she hangs herself, blind with pain, anger, and mental suffering, and in order that the blame of her death may fall on her husband. This solution is tragic and very common, and as a result when a husband has murdered his wife, he tries to make it look like suicide. In Nazaret we witnessed one of these cases, where the death was made to appear to be suicide by hanging, when the real cause of the woman's death was a kick in the stomach. Among the information we gathered is a reference to a similar case in Lower La Guajira, in which the cause of death was discovered only when the relatives of the woman washed her body before enshrouding it, as is the custom in La Guajira.

593 837 A fourth cause of ill-treatment is suspected or proven unfaithfulness on the part of the woman; the resentment appears when the man gets drunk or when the woman disobeys or gives some reason for complaint. He says in this case: "You didn't obey me because what I order is not ordered by so-and-so" (here he uses the name of her lover if he knows it) or "by the man who has taken my place" (if he does not know or only suspects it.) Frequently, he adds insults and blows. In these cases of suspicion or proof of infidelity, the lack of understanding between the couple increases and the ill-treatment extends itself to the children, whose paternity the father is beginning to doubt. At times, although the infidelity has been clearly proved, the man does not leave his wife nor apply the corresponding legislation, because he loves her and

[96 cont.]
832 673 and is made foolish and boastful of the difficult position she is placed in.

This charm, capable of such mischief according to the belief of the natives, is used especially when a man wishes to cause some woman harm or to mock either her or her relatives.

754 432 578 Fortunately for women in general they have a way to scoff at, or revenge themselves on, the men who have been false and whose love they no longer want – only revenge. For such cases they buy a charm from the old Indian women who know of these things, a charm which they place among the clothing of the man on whom they wish to effect a malevolent action. Then they obtain an old sandal belonging to their victim and burn it. It is most important that the sandal should be old so [826 828] that the sweat of the man in question, as part of his personality, should have soaked into it.

With these two simple things, the Indian women affirm, the man loses his senses, he goes about as if stupefied, neglects his person, is a failure and a brutish person thereafter. So sure are they of this that they say that a mad Indian living in Nazaret is in that condition because of a charm like that we have just described after he had been one of the most elegant and well dressed of Indians.

832 Another love charm is used not to regain a man's love that has been lost but to retain affection that is desired; and as it is the woman's property – for evil against the man – this aims at making the man unable to take another woman. This charm, like others, is obtained from the old Indian women of the Sierra de Jarara, and it is made of carefully ground herbs to which they add achiote, an excellent substance for charms. The mixture is wrapped in a rag, or it is kept in a little wool bag.

The effect of love charms can be diverted to other purposes. For example, when a woman wants her husband to make her a special present she goes to her charm, picks it up, shakes it well, and looks firmly at it, at the same time asking for the desired object. The charm works, and the woman obtains what she wished for.

Necklaces of small perforated discs of coconut shell are transformed into love charms when the women experts in this

[124 cont.]

585 c) There is another very important fact in this sexual aspect of the fiesta that we are describing, which is what we might call proof of virginity. [125]

Virginity in woman is highly valued by the natives in spite of the fact that at the present time, due to economic acculturative factors, it is increasingly difficult to find virgins among marriageable women, a state of affairs that the Indian male is well aware of. But it is always a matter of pride and something to be boasted of for a Guajiro man to find on his marriage night that his bride is a virgin. It is the custom, furthermore, that if the man marries not knowing that his wife has lost her virginity and has the consequent disillusion on his wedding night, the bride's relatives have to return a part of the livestock which the man paid for her, especially the family necklace. The Indian's concern about this matter, which remains hidden when he is in a normal state, comes to the surface during his drunken bouts, when he will sing about his wife, extolling her and boasting of having had a virgin in his marriage hammock, or insulting and degrading her in coarse improvisations when he considers that he has been defrauded.

524 This attitude toward sex on the part of the native, or better said this value he places on the virginity of his future wives, is expressed in a sort of game which is played at the Dance of the Kid. To play it, the girls gather in a group about a singer who sings such a song as this: "Let us see, my pretty miss, if you are a virgin, if truly you have not run around too freely, if no young male has put his hands on your body." He then passes his hands over each girl's body, tickling her. He starts at her big toe and goes upward, touching her instep, calves, knees, thighs, genitals, hips, stomach, torso, breasts, armpits, and continues up her neck until he reaches the top of her head. The girl who remains quiet, indifferent, without laughing and without even a smile wins the test and is declared a virgin. The singer then sings again: "You are indeed a virgin, my lovely majayura...," and chants a veritable song of flattery and finishes by escorting her to a set place. He then continues with the rest of the girls gathered there, repeating the same routine. When a girl moves or laughs,

5: Simons K-5 (ca. 1882) 1885
SC13 Goajiro SC13

133 venting anything being landed dry. The Colombian Government
504 erected a guard-house at the entrance of this bay last year, but I am afraid it will have to be abandoned as untenable. Puerto Estrella makes a very bad port, the small trading schooners having to lie in under the breakers. This is the last recognised Colombian port, at least pending the arbitration question. The next good port is the Laguna de Tucacas, in the Gulf of Maracaybo. This place is much frequented by Venezuelans, and a trade has sprung up that if not checked will ruin the already drooping commerce of Rio Hacha. The last port on the coast is that of Cojoro, and spoken of as the future port of Maracaybo, with which it would have to be connected by rail, an engineering feat of not much difficulty. The *ensenada* or bay of Calabozo has an inaccessible, heavy, surf-beaten coast.

614 The peninsula is inhabited by only one tribe of Indians. These are subdivided into many families or castes, bearing much analogy to the ancient "clans" of Scotland. Each caste or rather family circle is united against all comers, taking up the quarrel of any one of its members to make it general. The Goajiros are strictly conservative and aristocratic
556 in their ideas, wealth and interest are omnipotent. A poor man may be
● [578] insulted with impunity, when the same to a rich man would cause certain bloodshed. They have no veritable rulers, but each community
[622] recognises the wealthiest of its members as the chief or corporal, as he has been dubbed by the Spaniards, and look to him for protection. An Indian born poor, cannot become wealthy and great. Whatever herds he may accumulate, his humble origin would never be forgotten; he
[557] could, however, marry into a high caste family, having the means, and his children could become, through their mother's relations, great chiefs.
614 Besides the name, each caste or family represents some animal, and many of the minor castes, over and above their own symbol, adopt another of some more powerful denomination, to enjoy the privilege of a good protector. There are at present, altogether, some thirty odd castes among the Goajiros. Of these I was able to discover the names of twenty-two. The remainder are insignificant, little known castes, chiefly inhabiting the hills. There are about ten of importance, chief among these the "Urianas." This, the largest caste in the Goajiro, has subdivided or split up into many ramifications, such as Uriana tiger, Uriana rabbit, Uriana paularate (a song bird), Uriana gecko (lizard). This family is at present not only by far the most numerous, but also the richest; due to its connections by marriage with the Pushainas, formerly the wealthiest of the land. The Pushainas are to-day still
[558] great holders of tumas and ornaments, but with the Indian, only cattle, mules, and horses are real estate. The Urianas on receiving the tumas, sold out for cattle. The second in numbers are the Epieyues, as a rule they are poor. Under their protection are the Soouanas, again under these the small caste of the Guorguoriynes. A full list will be given

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

4 goats, 5 pigs, 15 hens, 25 skeins of yarn, 5 bars of soap (an expensive commodity) and some mirrors and handkerchiefs. Employees are very well insured, it would seem. If an employee destroys anything belonging to a third party, the employer has to pay twice its value or more. One's responsibility is not confined to what persons in one's service may do, but extends to animals and inanimate objects if one lends them. If I let an Indian ride my horse and the horse throws him off, I have to pay; and if someone cuts himself on a knife belonging to me, I have to pay—for it was my knife that did it. 672

It can even be risky to give advice in Guajira: for if you suggest a course of action and things go wrong, you may have to pay compensation. That is why the Indians will seldom tell you the way when you ask it.

A host is responsible to his guests, even if they are self-invited. Hospitality is sacred and one cannot refuse to receive someone seeking shelter. If the guest is ill, the host looks after him as best he can, but immediately sends for one of his relations. As soon as a relative arrives the host's responsibilities cease, but if the guest should die before the relative gets there, the host is liable for damages, hard as it may seem. On the other hand, if a person suffering from an infectious disease goes to someone else's house, it is the guest who is responsible and must pay his host damages. 672 574

If two guests start fighting the host is considered jointly responsible, for if he had not invited them there would never have been a fight. If the others present do not try to avert the quarrel, they must pay up too.

Insults and calumny are contrary to the law, and it is especially serious if one reviles another's mother's family. Among themselves the Indians consider it disparaging to be addressed in Spanish, instead of in their mother tongue. 683 [578]

Every Indian has a personal name used only by his nearest and dearest. For an outsider to pronounce this calls for a heavy penalty, as it does to speak the name of someone dead. As soon as it is learned that someone has died, all those with the same name at once change it for another. The 551 683

7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

him that can give the alarm. For a long time he has to refrain from all association with his friends and keep away from feasts. In the end, if agreement on compensation is not reached with the dead man's family, he will have to leave the district for a period of years. This precaution is to protect the slayer from the spirit of the man he killed, which would look for him in his normal haunts and would not recognize him under the new conditions, but it is also a protection against the dead man's nearest relatives, who will thirst for vengeance as long as compensation has not been agreed and paid.

We mounted and rode away from our first burial feast. On the fringe of the area stood six Indians armed, some with guns, others with bows and arrows. Their task was to shoot after all departing guests in order to scare off any dangerous spirits that might be intending to keep them company. Here, a deputy-host presented us with a live heifer. Every guest was to have a present of an animal according to his rank. We also had the meat that had been distributed that morning. It was considered quite all right either to eat it or to take it to eat on the way home. Several others were doing as we and there was a long line of departing guests, the men on horseback, the women mostly on donkeys. We all kept together for quite a distance.

Spirits rose as the heat increased, for drink had been handed out along with the meat, the Indians believing, as did the Creoles, that spirits were the best protection against the dangers of the hot sun.

A young Indian rode up to us. He wore a cloak with a beautiful pattern and was mounted on a splendid mare, which showed that he was of well-to-do family. He was in a bad mood, however, having been forgotten in the distribution of parting gifts and had not been given even a sheep. For that reason he was highly incensed with his neglectful hosts, whom he obviously scarcely knew.

We rode past an old man on foot dragging a calf behind him. The old man was obviously sober, but he kept muttering imprecations to himself. He too had been forgotten.

9: Santa Cruz E-5 (1958) 1960
SC13 Goajiro SC13

ground of the candidates selected by Perez so far, and he has found that only one among all the boys and girls recommended by him actually came from a Guajiro family that could not afford to pay for higher education. All the rest came from families, both pure Indian and with white mixture, belonging to the upper economic and social strata of the Guajiro society, who could easily pay for the education of their children.

These and other favors that Perez has granted to the upper social class have, undoubtedly, given him a unique status in the social structure. Perez is not respected in the same sense as Fernandez and Silva are respected, but his advice is sought and no favor he asks is ever denied. The older men, especially those enjoying certain leadership, look upon Perez with certain scorn as an upstart. For instance, on several occasions, when the present writer with Perez visited his father-in-law, Fernandez, the old leader, in a half-humorous and half-serious way, would repeatedly say: "This is To'lito; I am the To'olo," meaning that Perez was just a "little bull," while he was the big, the important "bull." Nevertheless, regardless of this general attitude of the older men, even they come to him whenever they want some favor from the Government. The writer has never heard Perez deny such requests to individuals of the upper stratum, while on several occasions it was noted that he refused to do anything on behalf of those who are economically and socially below him.

As far as the younger generation is concerned, Perez unquestionably has many friends and individuals who look upon him as the possible means of bettering their position. His bitter enemies are also to be found among the younger generation. These will stop at nothing in the hope of having him completely discredited in general and in particular they aim to have him lose his semi-official position. Just recently, this group went so far as to accuse him of having been a collaborator of the deposed dictatorial regime of Perez Jimenez and an enemy of the democratic government now in power in Venezuela. This landed Perez in jail but, as these accusations could not be substantiated, he was released in 24 hours. This incident is referred to here for the sole purpose of illustrating to what measures his enemies

9: Santa Cruz E-5 (1958) 1960
SC13 Goajiro SC13

will go to have him fall in disgrace. Whether these accusations are true or false is not our concern in this article.

Summing up Perez's position in Guajiro society we find the following facts: Among the older and more influential men, Perez is not considered as one of them and their attitude towards him is not a respectful one. He on the contrary is quite respectful towards them. No one, however, among this group can be classified as his enemy, and they do seek him out for advice in their dealings with Government officials. Among his contemporaries he enjoys a very influential position and practically everyone seeks his friendship. His true friends are to be found, without question, among this group, and, as far as it could be investigated, he has no real enemies among them, although there may be a few who envy his position. The younger generations are clearly divided into two groups—one group which truly respects and looks up to him, and another which is composed of his bitter enemies.

From the many formal and informal conversations the present writer has had with Perez—at his home, while traveling, when visiting some one else, etc.—the following analysis may be made of his behavior and position. While in Maracaibo, Perez soon became aware that he could attain no high status within a white culture where competition is always very keen. As Prefect of Sinamaica he clearly saw the possibilities of climbing up the ladder in Guajiro society and the first step he took towards that goal was to marry a full-blooded Indian girl from an important family, and to marry her in accordance with the traditional Guajiro law. There was very little chance for him to obtain the necessary wealth and to attain leadership status through property, but he saw the opportunity his semi-official position gave him to become the point of contact between the Guajiro and white cultures, cultivating both and becoming an almost indispensable person in the dealings the true natives had with the authorities. Whether his marriage to the Guajiro girl was purely for interest or whether there was any love involved is, of course, very difficult to say. As the writer made his headquarters in Perez's household at the Laguna del Pajaro, during his stay in the Guajira, he was able to observe, at first hand, the relationship between Perez and his native wife. These were always

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193 194 614 [128] a foreign observer encounters slight variations — as has just been mentioned. For this reason, in the table (p. 5) I put in the names corresponding with precisely the sounds that I heard most frequently; I have taken the map (p. 9) unchanged from the original.

614 101 178 101 614 marks are found in the table. Every Guajiro knows them. As an established tradition, every generation has taken over the details from the others, either as clan property or as a duty. But as a result of so many hostile encounters of the clans with one another — the Guajiro even in early times made themselves known as very quarrelsome — the boundaries of the individual clan-districts have shifted. Some clans have actually disappeared, either because their members were entirely destroyed or because individuals from them were incorporated into other clans. Therefore, the number and boundaries of the individual clan-districts were and are subject to insignificant fluctuations. I was unable to ascertain when the map provided — taken from a Colombian authority — was drawn; it appears to have come out around 1935. It is also found in V. Gutiérrez (p. xvi).

3. Concluding Remarks

614 [423] Spanish writers have reported on "castas" in Guajira from the early colonial period; the designation corresponds to actual totemistic clans. Recently it could be demonstrated that some thirty of them have existed since antiquity. The members of any one clan were entitled by common law to move freely over the whole peninsula without being hindered by the boundaries. When Petrullo (p. 155) states unmistakably,